

## Large Carriers Oppose Request To File Roaming Agreements

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Telecommunications Reports

English

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Several national wireless providers have asked the FCC to reject small and rural carriers' request for the agency to compel carriers to file roaming agreements so it can gather crucial data on the current state of roaming in the U.S.

In oppositions filed May 5 in Wireless Telecommunications docket 05-265, Cingular Wireless LLC, Verizon Wireless, and Sprint Nextel Corp. said the record in the FCC's current roaming proceeding is adequate to show that an automatic roaming mandate is not necessary. The national carriers also said the filing of roaming agreements alone won't show whether or not providers are unreasonably discriminating against other carriers when signing roaming agreements, and they expressed concern that the confidentiality of the accords could be compromised.

Last August, the FCC opened a fresh proceeding to consider whether it should modify the roaming obligations faced by wireless carriers, including by imposing an automatic roaming mandate on providers.

Small carriers have urged the Commission to make such a change, saying their larger counterparts often refuse to negotiate fair automatic roaming agreements with them, a situation they say has been made worse by consolidation. But national carriers say an automatic roaming mandate is not necessary in a highly competitive market, adding that they don't unfairly discriminate against small and rural carriers when signing roaming agreements.

In a petition filed last month, seven small carriers and the Rural Telecommunications Group asked the Commission to launch an inquiry pursuant to its authority under section 403 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and section 1.1 of its rules.

They said that most commercial mobile radio services (CMRS) providers can't voluntarily disclose details of roaming agreements they have with other providers due to contractual and other reasons. As a result, requiring the contracts to be filed "will assist in determining whether (a) unjust or unreasonable discrimination is occurring; and (b) there is a public interest need for the Commission to mandate requirements for the provision of automatic roaming at just and reasonable rates among carriers with compatible systems." The entities suggested the Commission require carriers to file a list of their roaming agreements and then the agency could ask for a "representative sample" to be filed. They said confidentiality of the documents could be maintained.

Joining the RTG in the petition were Airpeak Communications LLC, Airtel Wireless LLC, Cleveland Unlimited, Inc., Leap Wireless International, Inc., MetroPCS Communications, Inc., Punxsutawney Communications, and **SouthernLINC Wireless**.

"Commencement of such an inquiry into automatic roaming practices is inappropriate absent some evidence of a problem," Cingular replied. "Proponents of automatic roaming regulations have had ten years to compile a record regarding unjust and unreasonable discrimination in the provision of roaming services, but failed to do so." The carrier also said that "proponents of automatic roaming regulations bear the burden of rebutting the presumption against automatic roaming regulations by demonstrating that market forces are not working."

It added that reviewing "a 'representative sample' of roaming agreements will not demonstrate whether unjust and unreasonable discrimination is occurring. There is no dispute that carriers may have a variety of different roaming rates." Cingular added that resolving the issue "requires a fact-intensive, carrier-specific inquiry that is best suited to the section 208 complaint process."

"Petitioners' request is based on the faulty premise that carriers have failed to respond to the FCC's request for information that will enable the FCC to evaluate the market for roaming services and determine if a market failure exists," said Verizon Wireless, adding that 21 sets of initial comments and 24 sets of reply comments were filed in the current proceeding. If the Commission wants more information submitted for the record, all it needs to do is ask for it, Verizon Wireless added.

The carrier agreed that "roaming agreements would not provide evidence of unreasonable discrimination." Instead, the FCC "would need to know the circumstances that led to that particular rate, term, or condition being put in an agreement and the circumstances of the agreement or agreements to which it is being compared." Verizon Wireless also complained that compelling wireless carriers to submit data on their roaming agreements "would place a significant burden on carriers and jeopardize confidential information."

"The Commission's resolution of this issue depends on its assessment of marketplace conditions and whether there is a market failure that warrants regulatory intervention to protect consumers," Sprint Nextel said. "Mandating the submission of individual roaming agreements, or lists summarizing these agreements, would in no way assist the Commission in this assessment. To the contrary, such a requirement would only launch a needless fishing expedition that wastes scarce Commission resources, burdens every broadband wireless carrier in the country, and risks the disclosure of highly sensitive commercial information."



# Eufaula Tribune

## **Southern LINC Coming to West Barbour**

5-July-06

**West Barbour County is receiving cellular phone service.**

Southern Linc recently announced it would begin offering service to Louisville, Clio and other west Barbour towns.

"With the coming cellular service in Clio, our law enforcement, fire and rescue personnel will be able to better communicate in the field, improving service and allowing them to call other agencies when needed," Clio Mayor Jack Pelfrey said. "Our elderly will be able to communicate in their cars, or in case of a power outage. Our water, street, and garbage staff will be in better communication with each other, which should improve service-especially in times of crisis..."

Pelfrey and Louisville city councilman Ray Weston recently met with Southern Linc officials to push for the service. For years area residents have complained about the level of call coverage in the area.

A recent survey showed most Clio residents who do not have service would subscribe if reliable service was offered.

Clio has two water towers that cellular equipment could be attached to. Southern Linc engineers are shoring up the Alabama Power Company tower on County Road 15 before installing equipment.

### **Sewer project**

Clio's \$2 million sewer project to reline, replace and expand the city's crumbling sewer system is almost complete.

"With the \$2 million sewer project almost behind us, our application for federal and state grant funds for a water system improvement project is on target for this year's budgets and we should hopefully be starting that project this year," Pelfrey said.

"Extensive repairs are needed and once complete Clio's water system should be in compliance with the relevant ADEM regulations for years to come."

The city has sent applications for USDA Rural Development grant money and CDBG grant money to make system repairs. Water loss in recent years has been as high as 68 percent.

## **Cells, radios in storm plan**

July 8, 2006

- Agencies work to ensure communication during storm outages

By Janet Braswell  
Hattiesburg American

Emergency agencies across south Mississippi will use cell phones and ham radios to talk to each other if another hurricane disrupts normal communications systems.

Directors of emergency management agencies in Forrest, Lamar, Jones, Pearl River, Stone and three coastal counties have met several times this summer to patch together a communications system.

"In the event of a severe communication outage like we had before, this will help," said James Smith, Lamar County emergency management director.

Hurricane Katrina ripped through south Mississippi on Aug. 29, tearing down communications towers and traditional telephone lines.

"A lot of times we'd get calls from coastal residents up here and we had no way to get it back to the Coast," Smith said.

The state Department of Public Safety received \$17 million in supplemental hurricane funding last month for its integrated communications public safety fund, but the improvements can't be made in time to help if a hurricane hits this year.

The Forrest County Emergency Management District and several others are getting Cellular South phones with the Push2Talk walkie-talkie feature.

"It gives good coverage throughout the state," said Terry Steed, Forrest County emergency management director. "They're the only ones who really have that at this time. It's a back-up to the radio system. It will work in areas where the cellular side won't."

Law enforcement agencies, AAA Ambulance Service and some government departments in Hattiesburg and Forrest County will have at least one of the phones, he said.

"Some of the coastal counties already have the SouthernLINC system," Steed said. "What we're doing is putting a SouthernLINC phone in our emergency operations center to be able to talk to the power companies, MDOT and the coastal counties that are on SouthernLINC."

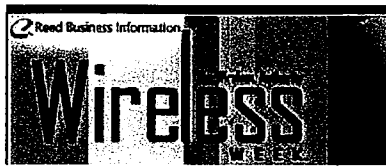
Amateur radio operators also are being recruited to help maintain communication when traditional lines are down, he said.

"The ham radio clubs and groups have taught several classes in the Hattiesburg area," said

Lex Mason, a longtime member of the Hattiesburg Amateur Radio Club.

Between 30 and 35 radio operators have been trained at Forrest General Hospital, where a radio station has been set up, and training starts next week at Wesley Medical Center for about 20 employees. Another class of about two dozen met at an area church.

"We've got a lot of new operators," Mason said. "There's never enough."



### **Carriers Batten down the Hatches**

Operators are beefing up their networks and lining up generators and fuel in anticipation of what could be another harrowing hurricane season.

**July 15, 2006**

The wireless industry proved its mettle during and in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, but this year, the message from carriers almost universally is, "We can do better."

From industry giant Cingular Wireless to smaller regional carrier Cellular South, carriers are making investments to withstand whatever this hurricane season brings. Cingular is investing \$1.8 billion this year to improve network coverage in the Southeast, while Cellular South is beefing up its Mississippi Gulf Coast network with \$8 million in new equipment and upgrades. Cellular South's upgrades include the permanent installation of \$2.5 million in microwave technology to circumvent damaged landline systems, a technique the carrier successfully used last year to get calls through.

The stakes may be even higher this year as carriers in the South are serving subscribers who are increasingly reliant on wireless. Telephia's recent ranking of U.S. metropolitan areas by monthly mobile phone usage shows subscribers in Southeastern markets are using their phones well above the national average of 718 minutes per month. Cellular South, for one, saw its customer usage skyrocket right after Katrina – and usage has remained elevated, with customers averaging 1,400 minutes per month.

**POWER, BACKHAUL ISSUES** As the FCC's independent panel reviewing the impact of Hurricane Katrina pointed out in its report for the commission, the two biggest issues facing wireless providers in the immediate aftermath of the storm were loss of power and lack of T1 or backhaul connectivity to complete calls. When it came to restoring service, security for their personnel and fuel were also top-of-mind for carriers.

Since Katrina, carriers have been busy "hardening" their networks, adding more portable and permanent generators and securing add-on agreements for fuel supplies. In the case of T-Mobile USA, the operator redesigned its liquid propane generators with underbelly fuel tanks so generators will have extended capacity.

For any disaster – hurricane, earthquake or other – T-Mobile routinely evaluates its processes and builds in redundancies. "We're constantly reviewing our lessons learned," says Josh Lonn, regional director of development at T-Mobile USA. With the past two years being especially tumultuous, "we have gotten very good at this [planning]."

It's Greig Fennell's job at Sprint Nextel to plan for the worst. As director of corporate business continuation, he heads Sprint's Business Continuity Office, overseeing the company's emergency planning, response and recovery efforts. Besides additional regional training, new this year are software tools that will enable more employees to log into their computers and view the status of the network, similar to what IT and network engineers have been able to see in the past, Fennell says. The company also is honing ways of disseminating useful information to customers, such as how long the network might be out in a given area.

**MICROWAVE RING** The most significant change this year at Cellular South is the permanent installation of its microwave ring, which will keep calls going when the landline systems are down, says Tony Kent,

vice president of engineering and network operations. The carrier also is adding EV-DO capabilities to its CDMA network on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, giving customers another means of accessing e-mail and other data should the landline go out of service.

Like other carriers, SouthernLINC Wireless, whose parent is power company Southern Company, increased the number of fuel-powered generators and added extra cells on wheels (COWs). The company also moved its coastal switching operations to its centralized Mobile Switching Office (MSO) in Birmingham, Ala., and made enhancements so that it will be more resistant to fire, water and lightning damage.

Similar to last year, SouthernLINC Wireless plans to activate phones for government agencies and public service entities in the event of a major hurricane, says Robert Dawson, president and CEO. Overall, "I think we're in better shape going into this season than we were last season," he says.

Dawson anticipates more evacuations at even the slightest threat of a storm because so many people are still living in trailers, and he's keeping an eye on inland areas that haven't been hit by a storm in a long time – areas that may be due for a big one.

In South Florida, Cingular representatives say they feel ready for whatever this season may bring. "We're prepared for an active hurricane season this year," says Rich Guidotti, local market vice president and general manager in South Florida for Cingular Wireless. "We feel confident in our abilities." As to preparations for the next big storm? "That's just a way of life down here."

## **WHAT THE BIG 3 ARE DOING**

### **Cingular Wireless**

- investing \$1.8 billion this year to improve its network coverage in the Southeast
- dedicating \$60 million for hurricane preparedness to harden the network with additional generators and implement an enhanced emergency response program
- maintaining two new mobile access command headquarters (MACH 1 and MACH 2), which can be rapidly deployed into an affected area and set up within two hours of arrival

### **Sprint Nextel**

- dedicating \$100 million for hurricane preparations in storm-prone coastal communities
- funding the purchase of portable generators, satellite cells on wheels (SatCOWs) and satellite cells on light trucks (SatCOLTs)

### **Verizon Wireless**

- says about 90 percent of its cell sites in hurricane-prone areas have on-site back-up generators
- maintaining a fleet of mobile generators and cells on wheels (COWs) that can be rolled into hard-hit areas
- prepared to set up Wireless Emergency Communications Centers in critical areas so that residents can make free local and long-distance calls and charge their cell phone batteries

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# 9-11 Authority approves Lincs as back-ups

By GENIE COLLINS

FRONT PAGE

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www.americustimesrecorder.com

ELLAVILLE — The Middle Flint Regional E911 Center will have Southern Linc on two of its consoles, thanks to the Authority's approving the measure at Tuesday's meeting.

Center Executive Director Ellice Fancher suggested to the Middle Flint Regional E911 Authority that Southern Linc only be used "as a back up" when other radios are not useable.

"We need to look at how

to communicate if our radios go down," Fancher said. She was talking about natural disaster planning. "You can talk to everyone there is, as long as you have the (Southern Linc) number."

Fancher later clarified these numbers would be "identification numbers."

Authority member Kenny Calhoun of Dooly County said use of Southern Linc is "our best shot at a back-up system and the cost is minimal."

Fancher said there is a \$250 one-time download charge and the Authority would pay

\$65 per month per unit hooked up to Southern Linc.

Authority member Jerry Battle of Sumter County noted the Authority at one point agreed to use Southern Linc as a back-up means of communication.

"I would hate for someone to need it and not have it," Battle said.

"This is the standard back-up communications for most of the counties," Chairman Bill Bowen of Sumter County noted.

Calhoun motioned to sign with Southern Linc on two

computers and "see how it goes. If there's a need for more, we can review the situation." With a second, the motion carried.

In other business, the Authority:

- Approved invoices in the amount of \$24,500 for July.

- Approved an invoice for a "repeater and duplexer" for the Marshallville Police Department in the amount of \$3,554.30.

- Heard an update on the National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) training for elected officials and other

government officials that was held in Schley County two weeks ago.

Fancher said the NIMS classes garnered a good turnout with approximately 70 people turning out for the training. The training is required, in order for counties to continue to receive federal funding, in the event of natural disasters.

Next week, the NIMS classes will be held for some public safety officials and supervisors.

Please see LINC on page 3A



# Dougherty discusses cell tower

FRONT PAGE

■ Dougherty County commissioners approve a \$65,000 reallocation to Albany Tomorrow Inc. to help it finish a downtown gateways project.

JAMES DIFEE  
james.difee@albanyherald.com

**ALBANY** — The Dougherty County Commission discussed Monday an application to construct a cellular tower in west Dougherty County, with one commissioner saying the county's rules about tower erections need to change.

Barinowski Investment Co. and SouthernLINC Wireless want to erect a 400-foot tower on about 33 acres zoned for agriculture use at the 5400 block of Dyson Road. The tower is designed to expand SouthernLINC's service area and accommodate other carriers.

Mark Harris, a Dyson Court resident, told commissioners that at least five families live in close radius of this thing. He said he's worried about the potential health risks to the elderly and children that live

Please see Tower, 1A

## ALBANY HERALD

ALBANY, GA

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## Tower

Continued from 1A

on Dyson.

Mark Barinowski of Barinowski Investment, who helped SouthernLINC identify the site, said that the location "is not a fly-by-the-night" decision, that the towers are heavily regulated and no danger to anyone, and that the tract of land was the only spot for the project.

Commissioner Jack Stone took issue with how close the proposed site is to the homes in Dyson Court. Stone said that the county's rules didn't make sense.

Planning Manager Mary Teter said that county ordinance requires towers to be 1.1 times their height away from property zoned residential, with one exception.

"There's a big or," Teter said Monday afternoon. "If the design engineer certifies that the tower will collapse within itself, it only has to meet the setbacks for the district in which it's located."

For property zoned for agriculture use, that's just 50 feet off residential property, public property or public rights of way, but Teter said the tower would be farther from homes than that.

The tower the commission discussed is a guyed tower, attached by cables to three anchors, and county ordinance requires that the tower's anchors be set back from residential property the same distance as the height of the tower.

The proposed tower would have two anchors that do not comply with the ordinance, Teter said, one with a setback of only about 100 feet. Teter also said the design needs to first be approved by the board of zoning appeals, which meets Wednesday.

Stone said after the meeting that he wants the county's rules to change.

"These towers should be far away from homes," he said. "They need to at least be as far away from homes as they are tall. They keep talking about what engineers say, but I'm talking about common sense."

Teter said that the city's ordinance requires that towers must be set back at least twice their height from property zoned residential, public property and public rights of way.

County Administrator Richard Crowdis said the tower is to be on the commission's Aug. 14 work session agenda for further discussion.

Among the information the Planning and Development Services Department provid-

ed to commissioners were letters from Georgia Power, the Albany-Dougherty Drug Unit and the Sheriff's Office, which all use SouthernLINC, supporting the tower's location.

In other business, commissioners approved 5-1, with Commissioner Lamar Hudgins in opposition and Commissioner Brenda Robinson-Cutler absent, a \$65,000 reallocation to Albany Tomorrow Inc. to help it finish a downtown gateways project.

ATI President and CEO Thomas C. Chatmon Jr. outlined for commissioners last week the gateway projects' expenses, which include about \$50,000 ATI spent above the more than \$685,000 in sales tax dollars it had.

The reallocation is to come from sales tax dollars set aside in the third sales tax project for the downtown Bridge House.

Hudgins said Monday afternoon that he voted against the reallocation because he doesn't know "who has a grip on (ATI's) finances."

"If every agency we fund overspent their budget by as much as they have, and then we find out after they've done it, and they come back and want more, where does it end?" Hudgins said.

# **dBusiness** BIRMINGHAM **News**

Birmingham (AL) dBusiness News

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Headline: SouthernLINC Wireless and the State of Alabama Join Forces to Plan for Hurricane Season

Source Web Page: [http://birmingham.dbusinessnews.com/shownews.php?newsid=89886&type\\_news=latest](http://birmingham.dbusinessnews.com/shownews.php?newsid=89886&type_news=latest)

Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM -- Following best practices of past years, SouthernLINC Wireless(R), a Southern Company (NYSE: SO), is joining forces with Alabama leaders to better align emergency response plans in the event that a catastrophic hurricane strikes the Gulf Coast again this year.

"SouthernLINC Wireless has a longstanding history of keeping its network up-and-running before, during and after natural disasters," said Michael Smith, general manager, government sales, SouthernLINC Wireless. "We've been a close communications partner with the state of Alabama for years. After Hurricane Katrina, it became imperative that we further our partnership to ensure the best communications possible, should another major hurricane occur."

Members of SouthernLINC Wireless's government sales team and key members of the Alabama Emergency Management Agency, Alabama Department of Public Safety, Alabama Department of Human Resources, Alabama Department of Public Health, Alabama Air National Guard, Alabama National Guard and Alabama Power have already held one meeting this summer. Additionally, all parties have been evaluating existing communications plans for hurricane season and collaborating on the best safety measures.

"Our agency has been working closely with FEMA and key partners like SouthernLINC Wireless to guarantee we're taking the best proactive measures to ensure we'll all be able to communicate this year," said Perry Martin, bureau chief for operations and field, Alabama Emergency Management Association.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, SouthernLINC Wireless' InstantLINC(SM) Push to Talk was the predominant means of communicating in certain hard-hit areas. As of September 1, 2005, only three days after Katrina hit, 98 percent of SouthernLINC Wireless' sites were up and running. And, as of September 8, 2005, 99.9 percent of SouthernLINC Wireless' sites were fully operational.

## About SouthernLINC Wireless

Celebrating its ten-year anniversary, SouthernLINC Wireless, a Southern Company (NYSE: SO), is an Atlanta-based regional wireless carrier covering the major metro and rural areas in Alabama, Georgia, southeastern Mississippi and northwest Florida. SouthernLINC

Wireless bundles multiple communication options into one phone including InstantLINC(SM) Push to Talk, cellular service, text messaging, wireless Internet access and wireless data. More information about SouthernLINC Wireless can be obtained by calling 1-800-818-LINC (5462) or visiting the SouthernLINC Wireless Web site at [www.southernlinc.com](http://www.southernlinc.com).

#### About Southern Company

With 4.3 million customers and more than 40,000 megawatts of generating capacity, Atlanta-based Southern Company (NYSE: SO - News) is the premier energy company serving the Southeast, one of America's fastest-growing regions. A leading U.S. producer of electricity, Southern Company owns electric utilities in four states and a growing competitive generation company, as well as fiber optics and wireless communications. Southern Company brands are known for excellent customer service, high reliability and retail electric prices that are significantly below the national average. Southern Company has earned the highest ranking among the nation's electric utilities in the American Customer Satisfaction Index for seven years in a row. Visit our Web site at [www.southerncompany.com](http://www.southerncompany.com).

Posted on: Wednesday, August 23, 2006 04:08 AM

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## Gulfport's Hurricane Heroes list

SUN HERALD

**GULFPORT** - The following is a list of "Heroes of the Hurricane" honored at a ceremony Monday night in front of city hall for their efforts following Hurricane Katrina.

1. **BANCORP SOUTH** - In the first few days after the storm, we realized that we had no means in which to pay our employees. Our friends at Bancorp South, under the direction of CEO Aubrey Patterson, came to our rescue and "opened" a bank in city hall so that our employees could cash their checks. Our thanks to Bancorp South...

2. Our friends from the **CITY OF ARAB, ALABAMA POLICE DEPARTMENT** - provided supplies, manpower, and financial support for our police department.

3. **JIM CANTORE, and THE WEATHER CHANNEL** - Our city has a true friend and supporter in Jim - he was here when Katrina came ashore, helped to transport our residents at the Armed Forces Retirement Home, and has continued to remind the country what happened here in our city on August 29, 2005.

4. **BAYOU VIEW HARDWARE** - In the few days after the storm, our good friend, Mac MacCaffrey from Bayou View Hardware gave our Public Works Department the keys to his store and trusted us enough to get what we needed as we put our city back in operating order - Good friends and business people like that were needed more than you could imagine...

5. **RW BECK DISASTER RECOVERY** - Although these guys were under contract with the city, they went above and beyond each day by working with our city offices to handle critical issues and went the extra mile by ensuring that the children of our area would have recreational programs in the future by hosting a golf tournament this Spring and raised over \$50,000 for our youth...

6. **GLEN DACY and CYNDY HOFFMAN - MIRACLES FOR MISSISSIPPI** - Glen is from Chicago and is a producer for ABC - he is also affiliated with the Indian Princess Club and teamed up with our friend, Cyndy from Florida who organized numerous "missions" to our city to provide Christmas gifts for our employees and rebuilding support for many of our police officer's homes. We are thankful for their continued support of our employees...

7. **SOUTHERN LINC** - In the immediate aftermath of the storm, communication was critical and it was also non-existent. Our friends at Southern Linc provided our

**Public Works Department and other city departments with radios so that we could work together as a city.**

**8. CITY OF MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI** - We are fortunate to have cities in our state who, although suffered losses themselves during Katrina, have continued to keep our city in their radar by providing continuous support to our city as well as other cities all along the Coast. We are honored to have

We are also honored to recognize two other employees from the City of Meridian who have become one of our own. These two gentlemen arrive about twice a month with an 18-wheeler loaded with items for our city and our employees. Our sincere thanks to:

**9. WALMART SUPERCENTER** - Every town is lucky to have a WALMART but no one is any luckier than we are- in the days and weeks after the storm, Faron Cabler , the manager of our GULFPORT WALMART, knew that we had to feed our employees in order to keep them working round the clock. He was kind enough to open the back doors of the store, with no power, and allow our department managers to go in and get what they needed - and he trusted us enough to allow us to write down what we took each time. Thank you for keeping us fed and for keeping our employees working...

**10. BOB TAYLOR** - Bob was the proprietor of Outback Steakhouse prior to Katrina and provided food and cooking support to our employees as well as county employees all at his expense. When Katrina swept away his beachfront restaurant, Bob knew he wanted to stay and be a part of Gulfport's future and how has opened his new restaurant, HIGH COTTON GRILL, in Gulfport.

**11. MISSISSIPPI MAIN STREET** - We are thankful for the support and financial funding provided by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Mississippi Main Street to help us rebuild our downtown area. We truly appreciate their expertise and look forward to rebuilding a new Gulfport.

**12. CITY OF CLINTONVILLE, WISCONSIN** - No department needed more help than our Public Works Department in the aftermath of Katrina. This city provided support to our Public Works department by repairing water leaks and cleaning out the sewer lines that were damaged and impacted by the storm. They have come a long way to be here tonight and we thank them for helping us when we needed them the most.

**13. COAST COCA COLA BOTTLING COMPANY** - Our friends at Coca Cola suffered severe damage to their building and had a very difficult time getting their product in to the city for its citizens. They were so willing to open up the back of their facility and allow us to get water and Powerade for our city workers as it arrived and we are so grateful for making us a priority.

**14. FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN POLICE OFFICERS** - So many of our police officers lost their homes in Katrina. This Christian-based organization came in the early stages after Katrina and continue to work today to help our police officers rebuild their

lives so that they can work to protect our city each and every day. We are honored to have from British Columbia -

15. GULFPORT SCHOOLS - We are so thankful to have a school system that was willing to open up their non-damaged schools allow our police department to use the kitchens cook for our employees. Special thanks for being great partners in the community...

16. HANCOCK BANK - Hancock Bank was one of the first in the community to arrive at city hall to see what could be done to help stabilize our employees. We thank them for providing banking support and for their commitment to rebuilding their home office that was severely damaged in downtown Gulfport.

17. THE FOOD NETWORK - We couldn't begin to thank our friends from THE FOOD NETWORK enough for the wonderful meals and support they provided to our police department and city employees in the aftermath of Katrina. We certainly had great meals thanks to their support.

18. SANDERSON FARMS of Laurel - There is no way to properly thank our friends at Sanderson Farms for all the truckloads of ice and fresh chicken that they provided to our employees each week. We are also fortunate that one of Gulfport's own, Mr. Joe Steinwinder, led the way in making sure his city was well taken care of. Thank you, Joe!

19. MARION COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT from OCALA, FLORIDA - After Katrina, we were in need of as much police support as we could possibly get our hands on. Our friends from the Marion County Sheriff's Department came to our rescue providing manpower to patrol the streets and support to our local law enforcement officers. We are honored to have them here with us tonight.

20. MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - Communities such as ours depend on hospitals on a daily basis to provide medical support to its residents. We are fortunate to have a hospital whose board of trustees, administration and medical staff go far beyond the call of duty for our city. You truly are heroes to each of us..

21. MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE - Another partner in our community, the students at the Culinary School at MGCCC came to our rescue and provided chefs to help cook for our many employees and public safety officials. They have also provided meeting space for our long-range planning Charette in February and have been there each and every time we called upon them.

22. FRED and ELAINE OSBORNE - Our friends from Gulf Shores, Alabama came to our rescue by providing support to our police department from the first days following Hurricane Katrina. They also provided items for our police during the holiday season to make the holidays a little bit brighter. Thank you AIRLINE AMBASSADORS...



## Hattiesburg (MS) American

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Headline: Counties revisit communications plans after Katrina

Source Web Page: <http://www.hattiesburgamerican.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060829/NEWS01/608290336/1002>

By Natasha Smith

Telephone poles snapped and knocked out service for much of South Mississippi.

Cell phone towers were damaged, leaving wireless communications sporadic and unpredictable. They couldn't even rely on satellite phones because not everyone had one.

Communication among emergency personnel and agencies came to a virtual standstill for days after Hurricane Katrina swept through South Mississippi and the Pine Belt a year ago.

"Being able to talk with one another is always a prime concern in an emergency," said Terry Steed, the Forrest County emergency management director who headed emergency relief efforts after the storm.

So Steed and other emergency officials in the Pine Belt spent the past year working on plans to improve communications and avoid a repeat of problems following Katrina.

For starters, Steed said his department is adding SouthernLinc phones and Cellular South Push2Talk phones.

The Cellular South Push2Talk phones work like a walkie-talkie. And the SouthernLinc phones allow emergency management officials to talk to each other and Mississippi Power Co. during a disaster.

Mississippi Power Co. provides electricity to customers in cities across the Pine Belt. Rural areas are served by electric power association cooperatives.

Forrest County also increased its monitoring of amateur radio broadcasts. Steed said county officials met with emergency management officials in Mississippi's nine lower counties to coordinate similar efforts.

Steed said his agency also has improved its emergency generators.

"If you run a generator for 20-plus days without cutting it off, it's like driving a car for 40,000 miles and not cutting it off," he said.

In Lamar County, James Smith, the county's emergency director, said communications were no problem within the county when Katrina hit. The problems came when trying to make contact outside the county.

The Lamar County Emergency Operations Center is now equipped with satellite radio and satellite telephones. The county will also have SouthernLinc phones and Cellular South Push2Talk phones.

Smith said his agency also has been working with amateur radio operators in other South Mississippi counties to coordinate their communication systems as well.

However, his department is not just relying on technology. Information boards will be posted at the county's fire stations for residents.

"Even in short power outages, we have to have communications means," Smith said.

Originally published August 29, 2006

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# Eufaula Tribune

September 3, 2006

## SouthernLINC will soon be in west Barbour

BY LISA MATHIS

Media: General News Service

West Barbour County residents have a reason to be happy.

SouthernLINC has installed a communications tower there that was activated Tuesday meaning residents will soon have another option in wireless service. Clio Mayor, Jack Pelfrey, said residents are excited. "Clio has always been a donut hole as far as cellular service was concerned. Over the past couple of years, efforts were made to get various cell phone companies to invest the money to implement their services," Pelfrey stated.

The city has a contract with a cellular phone company, yet they wouldn't improve their service, Pelfrey said. The call to SouthernLINC produced positive results.

The mayor said there are many elderly people that will be happy to have mobile phone service.

"They have a fear of their phone (landline) service going out in bad weather or are afraid of the line getting struck by lightning while on the phone. The new service could also help the area's economy according to Pelfrey.

"The world is getting smaller because of technology. This needed to be done to attract business," he said.

Potential business owners want to know they will have cell service throughout the area. Since many first responders in the area use SouthernLINC communication, may soon be made easier with the different emer-

**"They have a fear of their phone (landline) service going out in bad weather, or are afraid of the line getting struck by lightning while on the phone."**

JACK PELFREY

Mayor of Clayton

gency entities, Pelfrey claimed. Pelfrey is actually starting a

business to sell SouthernLINC phones in the area.

"But I will not be involved in the city's acquisition to SouthernLINC service," he said. "I am opening a cell phone business, but I have no government account authority."

Representatives of the cell phone company said service will be up and running soon.

"With the addition of the tower in Clio we now have roughly 35 cell sites in the greater Dothan area," said Bart Norton, store manager for SouthernLINC Wireless's retail store in Dothan. "We're dedicated to providing reliable wireless communications service to our customers. We are proposing the installation of 5-7 more cell towers in this area to be completed by the end of the year that will make our service even better."



## SouthernLINC offers cellular service to citizens in Clio area

Clio Wireless, a subsidiary of SouthernLINC, is offering cellular service to citizens in the Clio area. The service is available to residents of Clio, Alabama, and is provided at a reduced rate. The service is available to residents of Clio, Alabama, and is provided at a reduced rate. The service is available to residents of Clio, Alabama, and is provided at a reduced rate.

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November 01, 2006 11:35 AM Eastern Time

## **SouthernLINC Wireless and State of Alabama Renew Long-Standing Partnership**

*State Selects Regional Carrier Based on Experience, Technology  
Solutions and Coverage*

ATLANTA--(BUSINESS WIRE)--SouthernLINC Wireless®, a Southern Company (NYSE: SO), today announced that it has been selected as the official communications partner for the State of Alabama. The deal solidifies a contract-based relationship that began in 1997.

"The continuation of our longtime working relationship with the State of Alabama is a testament to the quality of our service, and the experience and dedication of our team," said Bob Dawson, president and CEO of SouthernLINC Wireless. "This was a highly competitive selection process and we're thrilled to have been chosen."

As a result of this agreement, all local agencies and municipalities using the SouthernLINC Wireless system will be able to quickly and easily connect with state officials via the Push to Talk service, which is extremely beneficial during emergencies. SouthernLINC Wireless has a proven track record of being a trusted partner during crucial times. The company's robust Push to Talk service was the predominant means of communicating in certain hard-hit areas in the wake of Hurricanes Opal, Ivan, Dennis and Katrina.

SouthernLINC Wireless has deep experience serving public sector and government agencies in Alabama. In fact, it was founded to support the needs of Southern Company's utility subsidiaries, so ensuring reliability in both metropolitan and rural areas has always been essential.

Under the terms of the agreement, state and local agencies have access to SouthernLINC Wireless's full suite of wireless technology solutions. In addition to a growing portfolio of mobile phones, the State of Alabama also has access to a host of wireless data devices and vehicle location solutions. Using SouthernLINC Wireless phones connected to laptops in their vehicles, officials can access national and state crime data including outstanding warrants or fines. Additionally, SouthernLINC Wireless offers wireless Internet location devices that can be installed on vehicles. This

service, iTRAK, is a GPS-based system designed by Data Burst Technologies, that transmits vehicle location information over the SouthernLINC Wireless packet data network. Users can view specific vehicle information and take advantage of many features including mapping, remote configuration, and reporting for every vehicle with an iTRAK device.

SouthernLINC Wireless provides integrated services using Motorola's iDEN® technology including Push to Talk, phone service, text messaging and data access. What's more, earlier this year SouthernLINC Wireless announced its intent to offer BlackBerry devices, which will also be made available to the State of Alabama.

#### **About SouthernLINC Wireless**

Celebrating its ten-year anniversary, SouthernLINC Wireless, a Southern Company (NYSE: SO), is an Atlanta-based regional wireless carrier covering the major metro and rural areas in Alabama, Georgia, southeastern Mississippi and northwest Florida. SouthernLINC Wireless bundles multiple communication options into one phone including Push to Talk, cellular service, text messaging, wireless Internet access and wireless data. More information about SouthernLINC Wireless can be obtained by calling 1-800-818-LINC (5462) or visiting the SouthernLINC Wireless Web site at [www.southernlinc.com](http://www.southernlinc.com).

#### **About Southern Company**

With 4.3 million customers and more than 40,000 megawatts of generating capacity, Atlanta-based Southern Company (NYSE: SO) is the premier energy company serving the Southeast, one of America's fastest-growing regions. A leading U.S. producer of electricity, Southern Company owns electric utilities in four states and a growing competitive generation company, as well as fiber optics and wireless communications. Southern Company brands are known for excellent customer service, high reliability and retail electric prices that are significantly below the national average. Southern Company has been ranked the nation's top electric utility in the American Customer Satisfaction Index six years in a row. Visit our Web site at [www.southerncompany.com](http://www.southerncompany.com).

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 **Print this Release**

Birmingham Business Journal - November 1, 2006

<http://birmingham.bizjournals.com/birmingham/stories/2006/10/30/daily13.html>

## **Birmingham** **BUSINESS JOURNAL**

BUSINESS PULSE SURVEY: Who makes the best barbecue?

# **SouthernLINC Wireless awarded contract by state of Alabama**

Birmingham Business Journal - 2:03 PM CST Wednesday

**SouthernLINC Wireless** announced Wednesday it has been selected by the state of Alabama to provide a variety of communications services. "The deal solidifies a contract-based relationship that began in 1997," the company said in a news release.

Questions about the value of the contract were referred to a state purchasing office staff member who was not immediately available.

Bob Dawson, president and CEO of SouthernLINC Wireless, a Southern Co. (NYSE: SO) subsidiary, said state officials chose SouthernLINC after "a highly competitive selection process."

Employees of local governments that use the SouthernLINC Wireless system will be able to connect easily with state officials, the news release said, noting that such ease of contact "is extremely beneficial during emergencies."

The contract with the state covers a variety of services provided by the Atlanta-based wireless communications company, including GPS tracking of government vehicles.

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## State signs wireless communications deal

November 1, 2006

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# The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Nov. 2, 2006

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SouthernLINC  
Wireless

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—Dow Jones Services



## Can You Hear Me Now?

Kesshia Peyton  
News 5  
Friday, November 10, 2006

For years, people in a small Alabama town had to drive for miles just to buy a cell phone.

The problem was when they got back home the cell phone wouldn't work.

There's never been cell phone service in the Clarke county town of Coffeerville....that is, until now.

Welcome to Coffeerville. Population? 300.

It's a quiet place where you can almost hear a pin drop.

But a new service has become the talk of the town.

"We were just excited to finally get something here in Coffeerville because we have one phone provider for our regular telephone service so to get a tower here in a small town is real exciting for us," said Southern Linc Manager Johnnie Cox.

The new Southern Linc tower is helping people in Coffeerville stay connected to the rest of the world.

"You can go with other companies and you just don't have any service until you go to Jackson, Grovehille or Thomasville or another larger city who has a tower so we would have no service," said Cox

That meant if you were in Coffeerville, talking on your cell phone meant you were speaking to dead air.

"I live nine miles from here but when I go back up towards the mountains in a high area, I might can get out. But who wants to leave their house and drive four to six miles to make a phonecall?" said Coffeerville resident Robert Scott.

"When I'm on the road by myself, I can get somebody where I couldn't before. I had to wait to get an area that had service.it's great," said Southern Linc customer and Coffeerville resident Greta Tyson.

Now with Southern Linc and its new tower, having a conversation in Coffeerville will be heard loud and clear. Some say it's like the city has come to the country.

the new southern Linc tower has only been up for about a week and the company says business has been steady.



Southern Linc says it plans to put up four more towers in Coffeerville so customers will have stronger and better service.

**This story can be found at: [http://www.wkrg.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=WKRG%2FMGArticle%2FKRG\\_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1149191632467&path=%21news%21local](http://www.wkrg.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=WKRG%2FMGArticle%2FKRG_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1149191632467&path=%21news%21local)**

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## PRESS-REGISTER

### In Coffeeville, they can hear you now

Friday, November 10, 2006

By **ANDY NETZEL**  
Staff Reporter

COFFEEVILLE -- A high-pitched ring cutting through the serenity of this rustic nook of Clarke County is a long-awaited sound for townspeople, many of whom had given up on the idea that their cellular phones would pick up a signal here.

Southern Linc's installation of a cellular service tower in Coffeeville -- population 300-something -- has people burning up minutes on their phones, ecstatic to tell people they're actually talking from inside their homes.

"It's like the city came to town!" Amanda Newton exclaimed with a wink.

She works at Village Pharmacy, where in addition to prescription drugs and Brut cologne, customers can buy a rifle or a box of Froot Loops, or they can get a tan on a tanning bed in the back.

It's also the place to hear about most of the happenings around town.

Newton, who commutes 20 miles from the county seat of Grove Hill, said she carries a cell phone around in case of emergencies. Until Monday, when the tower clicked on, she had service with another

company.

"I stood on one foot, tilted my head to one side, and maybe I could get a signal," she said. "I couldn't get a signal reliably five minutes outside of Grove Hill."

But this small community in between a lot of other places is no longer in between cell phone service areas.

The tower came after intense lobbying by Clarke County Commissioner Patricia DuBose. She courted several companies before convincing Southern Linc to build the antenna.

Clarke County, like much of rural Alabama, has spotty cellular coverage.

Michael Smith, the general manager of governmental sales for Southern Linc, said the company isn't hoping for big sales in the area. Installing the tower was more for the benefit of local law enforcement. However, he said, comments from people in the town show that the service will be appreciated by everyday customers, too.

James Brooks, a 40-year-old logger, pulled a Southern Linc phone out of his pocket when the tower was mentioned, and he smiled broadly.

Brooks said he knows some of the older folks in town don't have much use for a cell phone, but he's getting good use out of the first few days of the tower. He speaks to his mother in Montgomery nearly every night. Instead of paying long-distance charges on his landline, he now uses his cell phone to talk to her from his

living room some seven miles out of town.

Though some things are already a little different -- a few folks walk into businesses with phones plastered to their ears, while others hold conversations across from empty benches at the diner -- Brooks doesn't think it will have much of an impact on the town.

"Folks around here know respect," he said. "If there's someone around, they won't use it."

Michelle Bridges, who disconnected her Southern Linc cell phone a while back when she got frustrated with the lack of service, said she will now reconnect. She said she doesn't expect that reliable cellular service will have a social effect on the town.

"Coffeerville is always going to be Coffeerville," said Bridges in a tone that would indicate a lament if not for the hearty laugh that followed.

Jim Gundlach, an Auburn University professor and chairman of the sociology department, said the addition of reliable cell phone service will likely be a blessing to any community.

"When people have more social ties, societies work better," he said. "You end up with more social cohesion."

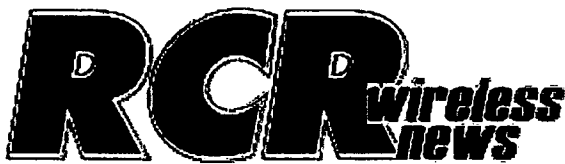
He said husbands and wives, longtime friends and confidantes can talk more often, enriching their relationships.

While being tied up on the cell phone may limit meeting some new folks, bumping into new people in a random way usually doesn't result in a meaningful relationship, Gundlach said.

If one is to believe a study that some of his students conducted, however, there is an important note to those in Coffeerville who may have wandering eyes: "One of the surprising results of that study was cell phones are a tool women use to keep their men from cheating on them."

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**RCR Wireless News**

**HEADLINE:** FCC pressured to act on 2-year-old SouthernLINC request

**BYLINE:** Jeffrey Silva WASHINGTON --

**DATE:** 25 December 2006

A bipartisan group of House lawmakers urged the Federal Communications Commission to act on SouthernLINC Wireless' two-year-old request for eligibility to draw on universal service funds to serve rural areas in several Southeast states of its territory, including those the iDEN carrier managed to continue serving when other communications failed immediately following Hurricane Katrina last year.

"In order to continue providing high-quality wireless services to underserved rural areas and to ensure emergency communications throughout disaster recovery, SouthernLINC Wireless must continue to make significant investments in its network. Promptly granting the applications of SouthernLINC Wireless for designation as an ETC [eligible telecommunications carrier] in Alabama, Florida and Georgia would further the commission's goals by facilitating the necessary investments," stated Reps. Charlie Norwood (R-N.C.), Daniel Scott (D-Ga.), Mike Rogers (R-Ala.), Jo Bonner (R-Ala.) and Nathan Deal (R-Ala.) in a recent letter to the FCC.

The lawmakers noted that 15 hurricanes have hit landfall in areas served by SouthernLINC Wireless and that in many cases the carrier alone provided communications in hard-hit areas of Mississippi and Alabama in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

An FCC spokesman said the SouthernLINC Wireless petitions are pending, but could not comment further. The agency is said to be reviewing some 35 other ETC requests.



## The Birmingham News

### Business brief roundup

Tuesday, January 09, 2007

%%head%%

Regional wireless carrier SouthernLINC Wireless, said Monday it added 21 cell towers last quarter in major metro and rural areas in Alabama, Georgia and northwest Florida.

The Atlanta-based subsidiary of Southern Co. said it installed 10 towers each in Alabama and Georgia and one in the Florida Panhandle to enhance its local coverage and improve call performance.

The new towers were built to "weather grade" specifications, enabling the network to withstand severe weather conditions, an important consideration for police and fire departments and other first responders.

SouthernLINC communications services include push to talk, cellular service, text messaging, wireless Internet access and wireless data. ProEthic migraine drug clears trial %%ehead%% %%bodybegin%% head%%

ProEthic Pharmaceuticals Inc., a Montgomery specialty drug company that acquires, develops, licenses and markets niche prescription products, said it has received successful Phase III clinical trial results for PRO-513, a drug candidate for treating migraine headaches.

Based on the findings, the company plans to file a new drug application for PRO-513, with the Food and Drug Administration. Protective, BB&T schedule webcasts %%ehead%% %%bodybegin%%

Birmingham-based insurer Protective Life Corp. plans to report fourth-quarter 2006 results after the market closes on Feb. 7, it said Monday. Managers will discuss the company's performance during a conference call at 9 a.m. the next day. The live webcast of the conference call will be available at [protective.com](http://protective.com).

BB&T Corp., a financial holding company based in Winston-Salem, N.C., with banking operations in Alabama, will report its fourth-quarter earnings before trading on Jan. 18. Chief Executive John A. Allison and Chief Financial Officer Christopher L. Henson will host a conference call to talk about the earnings at 10 a.m. It will be webcast at [BBT.com](http://BBT.com).

Adtran Inc., the Huntsville provider of telecommunications equipment, will make a presentation at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday at Needham & Co.'s ninth annual Growth Conference. From wire reports --

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